



URBAN SNOW AND ICE CONTROL PROGRAM COUNCIL POLICY

OPE-150
Effective Date:
October 6, 2026

POLICY STATEMENT

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (the "Municipality") aims to provide for the safe passage of vehicles and pedestrians within the geographical boundaries of Fort McMurray (the "Urban Service Area"). The Urban Snow and Ice Control Program ensures that Snow and Ice Control is carried out on Roads, Back Alleys, Sidewalks, and Trails in a timely manner in accordance with priorities identified by Council.

The Urban Snow and Ice Control Program Council Policy (the "Policy"):

- sets winter Snow and Ice Control service standards for Urban Service Area Roads, Back Alleys, Sidewalks, and Trails;
- supports reduction of hazards and mitigation of economic loss; and
- prioritizes safe access to emergency vehicles and transit.

DISCLAIMER

The service levels and response times set out in the Policy below are intended to provide operational guidance under normal conditions and are not guarantees of service. The Municipality will make reasonable efforts to meet the service levels outlined in this Policy. However, service delivery may be affected by factors, including, but not limited to, extreme weather conditions, snowfall intensity or duration, emergency situations, equipment failures, traffic conditions, and illegally parked vehicles. Where circumstances require, the Municipality may adjust priorities, response times, schedules, and service levels to address public safety needs and maintain overall operational effectiveness.

DEFINITIONS

"Back Alley" means a Road providing direct access to adjacent lands that is typically parallel to other classification of streets, and is primarily used for access, deliveries, and refuse collection.

"Extreme Freeze Thaw" means a temperature fluctuation that results in ruts exceeding ten (10) centimetres in depth on a snow-packed Road.

"Extreme Weather Response" means the municipal response to Significant Snowfall, Extreme Freeze Thaw, or Severe Weather.

"Greenbelt" means an open grassed area or park space adjacent to a Road.

"Priority One Routes" means routes that include heavy usages Roads, including arterial Roads and other Roads that provide access for emergency services, including police and fire services.

"Priority Routes" means Priority One Routes, Priority Two Routes, and Priority Three Routes.

"Priority Three Routes" means routes that have geometric or alignment characteristics, including steep or narrow hills, that require occasional service to improve user safety.

"Priority Two Routes" means routes that include school zones, Urban Service Area transit routes, and primary access routes to residential neighborhoods.

"Road" means that part of a highway intended for use by vehicular traffic, including Back Alleys but not including gravel roads or private roads.

"Sanding and Salting" means the controlled application of abrasive materials, de-icing agents, or chemicals, including, but not limited to, mixtures of sand, granular sand, liquids, road salt, calcium chloride, and other approved products or blends.

"Severe Weather" means a weather event during which more than thirty (30) centimetres of snow falls within a twenty-four (24) hour period and may include blowing snow and reduced visibility.

"Sidewalk" means a hard-surfaced walkway, typically constructed of concrete, located within a public right-of-way, municipal easement, park, or other municipal property, intended primarily for pedestrian travel.

"Significant Snowfall" means a weather event during which between twenty (20) and thirty (30) centimetres of snow falls within a twenty-four (24) hour period.

"Snow and Ice Control" means the control of the accumulation of packed snow or ice on Roads through the use of equipment, abrasive materials, or chemicals that comply with applicable regulations.

"Snow Plowing" means the pushing of accumulated snow from a Road to the sides or centre of the Road or from a Sidewalk surface to the centre of the Sidewalk to maintain no less than one lane passage in each direction.

"Snow Removal" means the removal of the plowed snow by loading it into vehicles for transport or by casting it from a Road onto adjacent land or boulevards within the Road right-of-way.

"Snow Storage" means the storage of bladed, plowed, or cast snow on adjacent land or boulevards within the Road right of way as well as the storage of snow at designated snow disposal sites.

"Snowfall" means a weather event during which less than twenty (20) centimetres of snow falls within a forty-eight (48) hour period.

"Stockpile" means snow that has been deposited into a pile during Snow and Ice Control activities.

"Subzones" means the designated subzones established under the Winter Maintenance Zone Program.

"Trail" means a designated pathway located within municipal parks, open spaces, or transportation corridors, that is and intended to accommodate multiple users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and users of other approved non-motorized modes of travel.

"Windrow" means a row of snow that is left by the blades of a snowplow during Snow Plowing.

"Winter Maintenance Zone" means a zone that is designated as a no parking area for a prescribed day and duration under the Winter Maintenance Zone Program.

"Winter Maintenance Zone Program" means the municipal program providing Snow Plowing and Snow Removal for designated residential Roads from October 15 to April 15 each year.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Continuous Improvement - The Municipality is committed to regularly monitoring and reviewing the Urban Snow and Ice Control Program, and to using such findings to support continuous improvement.
2. Public Awareness - The Municipality is committed to increasing public awareness of the Urban Snow and Ice Control Program, and to using a variety of communication channels to relay accurate and up-to-date information.

SERVICE STANDARDS

3. The Municipality will endeavour to maintain Priority Routes to a compacted snow surface condition wherein snow on Road surfaces is compacted by traffic or leveled by snowplows.
4. The Winter Maintenance Zone Program operates on a two (2) week rotational schedule.
 - a. Completion of Snow Plowing for all Subzones within the Winter Maintenance Zone Program takes two (2) weeks to complete under normal weather conditions.
 - b. Completion of Snow Removal for all Subzones within the Winter Maintenance Zone Program takes four (4) weeks to complete under normal weather conditions.
5. The Winter Maintenance Zone Program will continue in accordance with established schedules throughout the winter season. The established schedule includes statutory holidays and school breaks.
6. The Winter Maintenance Zone Program schedule may be modified as necessary to maintain operational efficiency.
7. The Chief Administrative Officer may, at their discretion, modify operational priorities and service levels, as necessary.

PRIORITY ROUTES

PRIORITY SCHEDULE

8. Snow and Ice Control shall be carried out in the following order of priority to best serve the public, facilitate the movement of emergency vehicles, and align with Council-approved budget allocations, as follows:
 - a. Priority One Routes;
 - b. Priority Two Routes; and
 - c. Priority Three Routes.
9. Pursuant to sections 6 and 7, the established priority order may be modified as operational circumstances require.
10. The Municipality will make reasonable efforts to avoid Snow Plowing or Sanding and Salting in school zones between 7:30 AM and 9:00 AM and between 2:30 PM and 4:00 PM on school days.

SNOW PLOWING DURING SNOWFALL

11. During a Snowfall, Snow Plowing will be carried out in accordance with the priority order established in section 8, as equipment and personnel resources permit.
12. During a Snowfall, Snow Plowing will occur on both sides of the Road, adjacent to the curb and the public boulevards.
13. For Roads adjacent to Greenbelt areas, snow may be plowed to the Greenbelt side.
14. For Roads with a centre median, snow may be plowed onto the centre median.
15. For Roads that are not adjacent to a Greenbelt and without a centre median, snow may be plowed to the centre of the Road for Snow Storage pending Snow Removal (e.g., Franklin Avenue from Morrison Street to Hardin Street).

SNOW PLOWING DURING SIGNIFICANT SNOWFALL OR SEVERE WEATHER

16. During a Significant Snowfall or Severe Weather, Priority One Routes shall be plowed on a continuous basis, as equipment and personnel resources permit.
17. Upon completion of Snow Plowing on Priority One Routes, Snow Plowing operations shall commence on Priority Two Routes.
18. Upon completion of Snow Plowing on Priority Two Routes, Snow Plowing operations shall commence on Priority Three Routes.

SANDING AND SALTING OF ROADS

19. When conditions warrant, Sanding and Salting will be carried out in accordance with the priority order established in section 8.
20. Conditions that may affect priority include, but are not limited to:
 - a. temperatures and ambient conditions conducive to the formation of ice on Roads;
 - b. ice accumulation near intersections, stop signs, yield signs, school zones, or school crossings;
 - c. freezing rain events; or
 - d. other hazardous situations.
21. Sanding and Salting may be undertaken in conjunction with Snow Plowing, Snow Removal, or other maintenance activities, or may be performed independently.
22. The Municipality's Salt Management Plan establishes salt management practices intended to support the provision of safe, efficient, and cost-effective Roads while minimizing adverse environmental impacts.

SNOW CLEANUP

23. For Priority Routes, the Municipality will endeavour to relocate snow accumulated along the centre line of the Road to the curb sides or centre median to widen the Road, including left turn lanes, right turn lanes, and transit lanes.
24. The Municipality will endeavour to remove snow in transit lane areas to facilitate safe access for transit vehicles and pedestrians.

SNOW REMOVAL

25. Snow Removal may be carried out to:
 - a. increase the driving width of a Road where the available driving surface is less than five and a half (5.5) metres;
 - b. increase the Snow Storage capacity of a Road; or
 - c. mitigate sightline hazards and maintain visibility at intersections and for cross traffic where snow accumulation exceeds one (1) metre in height.
26. Snow Removal may also be carried out where:
 - a. the location of a Sidewalk impedes Snow Plowing operations; or
 - b. Snow Removal is required to reduce the impact of spring runoff in Greenbelt areas.
27. When required, Snow Removal may be carried out on rural cross-section Roads in the Urban Service Centre, including Roads that do not have curb or gutter infrastructure.
28. At the discretion of the Director, Public Works, or designate, Snow Removal may be carried out in advance of forecasted Severe Weather to ensure adequate capacity for Snow Storage.
29. Temporary "No Parking" or "Street Maintenance" signs will be posted at least twenty-four (24) hours before the commencement of Snow Removal operations.
30. Vehicle owners using on-street parking must remove their vehicles from the signed area within twenty-four (24) hours of the signs being posted.
 - a. On-street parking is prohibited until Snow Removal is complete.
31. Vehicles parked in contravention of posted "No Parking" signs will be ticketed and may be towed to the nearest available lawful parking location at the owner's expense in accordance with the Roads and Transportation Bylaw No. 25/020.

SIDEWALKS

SIDEWALKS ADJACENT TO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

32. A person shall remove snow and ice from any Sidewalk adjacent to property that they own or occupy within forty-eight (48) hours after the snow or ice has formed or been deposited thereon, in accordance with the Community Standards Bylaw No. 21/010.
33. A person shall not deposit snow or ice or other obstruction upon any Sidewalk, highway, public place, or private property that is not their own, in accordance with the Community Standards Bylaw No. 21/010.

MUNICIPAL SIDEWALKS AND TRAILS

34. Snow Plowing of municipal Sidewalks and Trails shall be prioritized as follows:
 - a. Priority one - municipal Sidewalks and Trails on arterial routes serving emergency facilities, transit stops, and schools, will be plowed within forty-eight (48) hours following a Snowfall, Significant Snowfall, or Severe Weather;
 - b. Priority two - municipal Sidewalks and Trails located on collector routes that connect arterial roadways and local Roads will be plowed within four (4) days following a Snowfall, Significant Snowfall, or Severe Weather and;
 - c. Priority three - all other municipal Sidewalks and Trails will be plowed within seven (7) days following a Snowfall, Significant Snowfall, or Severe Weather.
35. When temperature and ambient conditions are conducive to the formation of ice on Sidewalks and Trails, Sanding and Salting shall be undertaken to promote traction in accordance with the priorities outlined in section 34.

WINTER MAINTENANCE ZONE PROGRAM

36. Under the Winter Maintenance Zone Program, every residential street in the Urban Service Area is assigned both a Winter Maintenance Zone and a Subzone. The Winter Maintenance Zone identifies the designated weekday for maintenance.
 - a. There are five Winter Maintenance Zones: Monday Zone, Tuesday Zone, Wednesday Zone, Thursday Zone, and Friday Zone.
 - b. There are four Subzones: Subzone 1, Subzone 2, Subzone 3, and Subzone 4.
37. When Winter Maintenance Zones are active, Snow Plowing or Snow Removal on residential Roads within the designated Subzones will be conducted on a two (2) week rotational schedule.

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- a. This schedule may be modified as necessary to maintain operational efficiency in response to operational requirements, weather conditions, available resources, or other unforeseen circumstances.
38. When Subzones 1 and 2 are active, Subzones 3 and 4 will be inactive. During the scheduled cycle, when Subzones 3 and 4 are active, Subzones 1 and 2 will be inactive.
39. When active, a Subzone will be active for either Snow Plowing or Snow Removal, but not both simultaneously.
40. Permanent "No Parking" signs within Winter Maintenance Zones identify the applicable Subzone, the scheduled day for Snow Plowing or Snow Removal, and the times during which parking restrictions are in effect.
41. When a Subzone is active, parking will be restricted within that Subzone between 7:00 AM and 6:00 PM.
42. Vehicles parked in contravention of permanent or posted "No Parking" signs will be ticketed and may be towed to the nearest available lawful parking location at the owner's expense in accordance with the Roads and Transportation Bylaw No. 25/020.

SNOW PLOWING

43. Snow within Winter Maintenance Zones will be plowed to both sides of the Road after a Snowfall of five (5) centimetres or greater, or when snow along the centre of the Road measures five (5) centimetres in height or greater.
 - a. Snow will be plowed adjacent to the curb and onto municipally owned boulevards.
 - b. In cul-de-sacs, snow may be plowed to the centre of the cul-de-sac and removed at a later time.
 - c. For Roads adjacent to a Greenbelt, snow will be plowed to the Greenbelt side.
44. When conditions warrant, Sanding and Salting will be carried out in accordance with sections 19 through 22.

SNOW REMOVAL

45. Snow Removal under the Winter Maintenance Zone Program will be carried out in accordance with sections 25 through 31.

46. Snow Removal within Subzones will occur on the designated day for the applicable Subzone, unless operational requirements or weather conditions necessitate rescheduling, or unless snow accumulation has been sufficiently reduced through natural melting.

SIDEWALKS

47. Where Snow Plowing within Subzones results in snow being deposited on a Sidewalk, the Municipality shall remove such snow. Snow Removal for all other Sidewalks shall be carried out in accordance with section 34.

EXTREME WEATHER RESPONSE FOR WINTER MAINTENANCE ZONES

48. The Chief Administrative Officer, or designate, has discretion to initiate an Extreme Weather Response.
49. During an Extreme Weather Response, the established schedule for Winter Maintenance Zones will be suspended and a parking ban may be declared.
 - a. Where possible, the Municipality will provide twenty-four (24) hours notice before implementing parking restrictions.
 - b. For Significant Snowfall and Extreme Freeze Thaw events, rolling parking bans by Subzone will remain in effect between 6:00 AM and 6:00 PM.
 - c. For Severe Weather events, rolling parking bans by Subzone will remain in effect on a 24-hour basis until Snow Plowing has been completed.
50. During an Extreme Weather Response, Snow Plowing resources will be deployed.
 - a. Upon completion of Snow Plowing, the Municipality will assess the need for Snow Removal.

BACK ALLEYS

51. Snow Removal on Back Alleys will be initiated only after Priority Routes and Winter Maintenance Zones have been completed, or when Back Alley snowpack reaches ten (10) centimetres in height.
52. When Back Alleys are initiated, Snow Removal will be carried out in the following order:
 - a. Back Alleys that provide the sole vehicular access to a property;
 - b. Back Alleys that are used for refuse collection; and
 - c. all other Back Alleys.

53. Sanding and Salting will not ordinarily be carried out for Back Alleys unless conditions warrant. Such conditions may include freezing rain events, ice accumulation, or other hazardous conditions.

WINDROWS AND STOCKPILES

54. Windrows and other Stockpiles of snow may be created as a result of Snow and Ice Control activities.
55. Windrows and Stockpiles of snow may present hazards to motorists, pedestrians, and other users.
 - a. Persons attempting to access property that is obstructed by a Windrow are encouraged to use an alternate point of access where possible or wait until the Windrow has been reduced or removed.
 - b. Persons are encouraged to exercise caution and refrain from climbing on Stockpiles.
56. When Windrows measuring fifteen (15) centimetres or greater in height are created as a result of Snow and Ice Control activities, the Municipality will endeavour to remove such Windrows within twenty-four (24) hours:
 - a. from driveway entrances located within Winter Maintenance Zones; and
 - b. from approved on-street accessible parking stalls.
57. The Municipality will not remove Windrows:
 - a. measuring less than fifteen (15) centimetres in height from driveway entrances located within Winter Maintenance Zones;
 - b. measuring less than fifteen (15) centimetres in height from approved on-street accessible parking stalls.
 - c. at driveway entrances on Priority Routes, regardless of height; or
 - d. resulting from causes other than Snow and Ice Control on Priority Routes or within Winter Maintenance Zones.

SNOW AND ICE CONTROL RESOURCING

58. Where operational requirements warrant additional resources, the Municipality may:
 - a. deploy municipal staff on overtime assignments;
 - b. retain contracted equipment and services, where available; or
 - c. deploy municipal staff on overtime assignments and retain contracted equipment and services.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

59. The Municipality is committed to providing clear, coordinated, and timely communication throughout the winter maintenance season.
60. The Municipality shall make the following information available to the public:
 - a. maps of Winter Maintenance Zones;
 - b. maps of Priority Routes;
 - c. daily progress map showing the status of roadway winter maintenance activities;
 - d. current parking restrictions and parking bans;
 - e. information related to winter maintenance signage; and
 - f. other relevant information.
61. Public education and advance notice may be provided through a variety of communication channels, including the municipal website, social media, direct mail, radio, digital advertising, billboards, community outreach initiatives, and, where available, SMS or text message alerts.
62. Where possible, the Municipality will provide advance notice to the public when a parking restriction, parking ban, or Extreme Weather Response is declared.

RECORD KEEPING

63. The Director, Public Works, or designate, shall maintain records related to the Snow and Ice Control Program, including, but not limited to:
 - a. daily weather forecasts;
 - b. date and time of Snow and Ice Control operations; as well as equipment and operator information; and
 - c. global positioning system (GPS) information for deployed equipment, where available.

RESCIND AND REPLACE

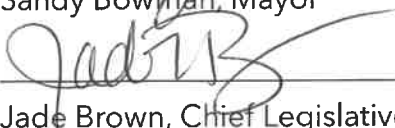
This Council Policy rescinds and replaces Urban Snow and Ice Control Program Council Policy OPE-150, dated October 10, 2023.

APPROVAL

This Council Policy is approved by:



Sandy Bowman, Mayor



Jade Brown, Chief Legislative Officer

October 6, 2026

Date

SUPPORTING REFERENCES

- Community Standards Bylaw No. 21/010
- Roads and Transportation Bylaw No. 25/020

DETAILS AND REVISION HISTORY

Date	Action	Description
October 10, 2000	Introduction	New Snow Plowing, Sanding, and Snow Clearance Policy.
July 10, 2001	Revision	Changed name to Snow Clearance Policy and revised general procedures.
September 9, 2003	Revision	Changed number to PRL-150 and revised service levels.
June 22, 2010	Revision	Changed name to Urban Snow Clearance Policy and revised content revised in all sections of the Policy.
January 12, 2016	Revision	Changed name to Urban Snow and Ice Control Policy, revised all sections of the Policy, and moved select clauses to the Urban Snow and Ice Control Administrative Directive PRL-180.
October 10, 2023	Revision	Changed name and number to Urban Snow and Ice Control Program Policy OPE-150 and revised all sections of the Policy.
October 6, 2026	Revision	Revised Policy format to align with the new template and Policy Management Framework. Added a general disclaimer and guiding principles. Removed sections not included in the new template and revised all remaining sections.